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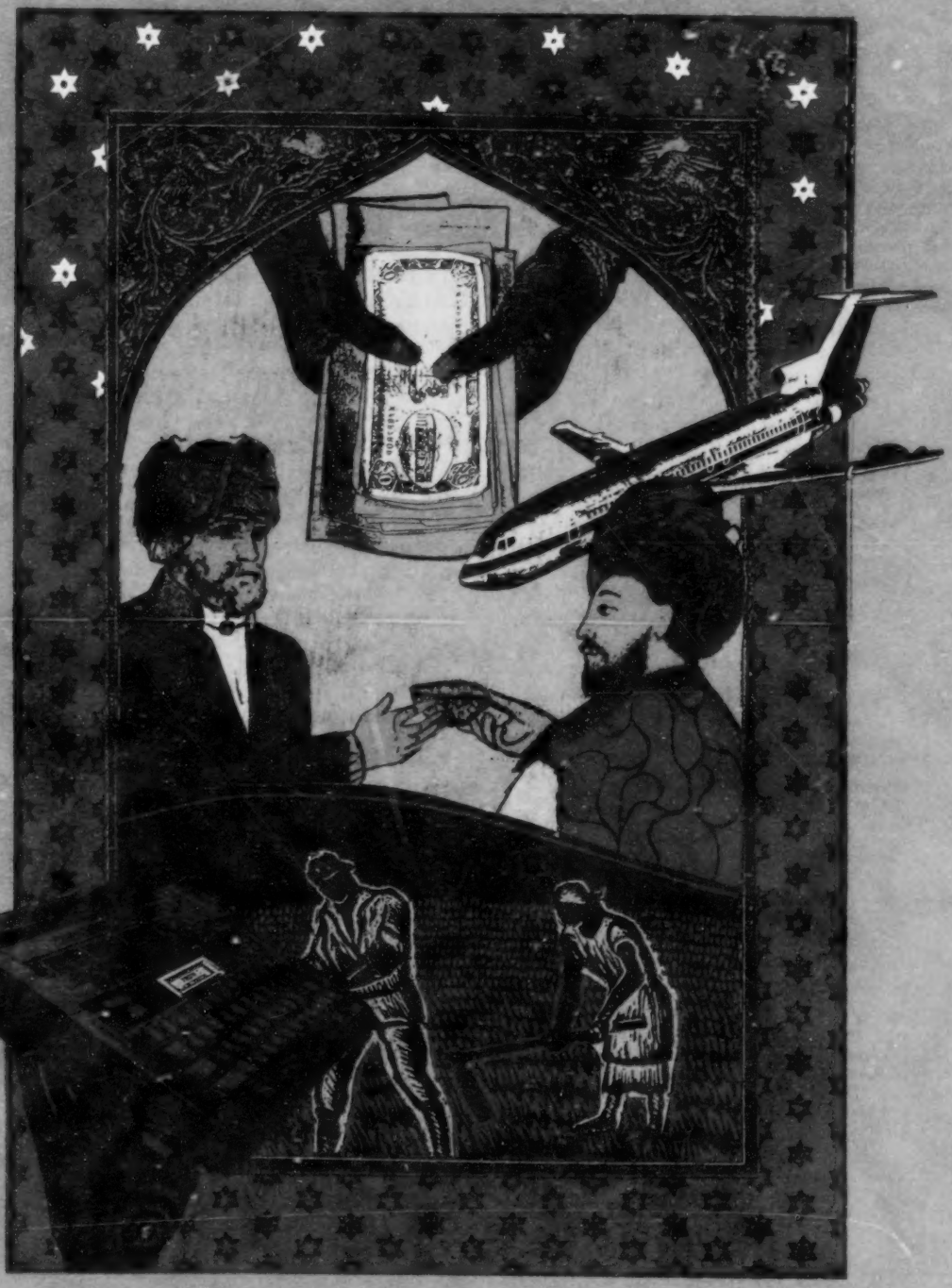
COOPERATION SOUTH



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The TCDC emblem on our cover displays a symbolic bridge joining the countries and people of the Southern hemispheres. The centre of the emblem—where the Southern, Northern, Eastern and Western parts of the world all join—symbolizes a further and ultimate objective of TCDC: the enhancement of truly global partnership for development.

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Human Development

Forging New TCDC Links: Eastern Europe and the South

Leelananda Silva points out how the political and economic changes in the former socialist bloc have opened up new possibilities for technical cooperation with the developing countries of the South. The author is a Sri Lankan development expert, based in England, who works as a consultant for UNDP and other international agencies.

One of the most important international issues of the 1990s is the integration of the transitional economies of the former socialist bloc countries into the mainstream of the market-oriented world economy. This group of countries, with its population of over 350 million, is obviously crucial to the viability of the global economic system and must be helped through the present difficult phase. Recognizing this need, many international agencies and bilateral donors have established programmes of assistance for the former planned economies. However, one important opportunity has not received the attention it deserves—namely the potential for cooperation between the former socialist bloc countries and the countries of the developing world, or what is often nowadays called "East-South cooperation."

This form of cooperation of course already exists. The capacities and needs matching exercises organized by the Special Unit for TCDC of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) frequently involve participation by the countries of the former socialist bloc. These exercises have led to a number of collaborative projects between East and South. However, much more needs to be done if the full potentialities of East-South cooperation are to be realized.

Understandably, many developing countries have reacted to the new world situation with apprehension. They fear that scarce capital will be diverted away from them, and that the markets of the richer countries will now be open to new competitors from the East. However, in looking at the clouds they are missing the silver lining: the new possibilities for mutual benefit to East and South. Economic relations, instead of being determined primarily by political, ideological and security considerations, can now be shaped by market forces and the genuine matching of capacities and needs. What is needed, therefore, is a concerted effort by both groups of countries and their representative organizations to analyse and explore the opportunities for expanding economic and technical cooperation. Such cooperation can flow in both directions: South-to-East and East-to-South.

The possibilities for South-to-East cooperation have greatly increased over the past two or three decades, as developing countries have become much more heterogeneous in their capacities. In particular, many Asian and Latin American economies now have the ability to extend technology and expertise to the eastern economies in transition. India, for example, with its growing technological prowess, has much to offer. A number of countries, such as the newly industrialized nations of East Asia, can also provide capital investment. Countries such as Iran, Pakistan and Turkey, which border the former Soviet Union, have the added advantage of cultural, ethnic

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and linguistic ties with their neighbours. These ties have already led to economic contacts.

Clearly, the major current preoccupation of the former socialist bloc economies is how to manage the transition to a more market-oriented system. This requires a host of new laws and regulations and the creation of new financial and commercial institutions that can effectively service a growing market economy. Banks, savings institutions, stock exchanges, insurance mechanisms, chambers of commerce - all of these need either to be created anew or drastically reformed. For example, there is a marked absence of rural credit organizations based on private savings and investment. Here, an enterprise such as the Grameen Bank of Bangladesh might provide some very useful lessons. If the methodology of the Grameen can be exported to the United States, then why not to Romania or Kazakhstan?

In assisting this difficult transition, the developing countries possess certain advantages over the fully industrialized countries of the North. Many of them already have experience in the development of the private sector without necessarily being wedded to a totally free market ideology. They are therefore often in a better position to offer the kind of pragmatic assistance that the transitional economies need.

Both private and public firms in formerly centrally planned economies will require large numbers of trained managers, accountants and other skilled personnel to operate these enterprises in a more competitive climate. In many developing countries, such as India, the Republic of Korea, the Philippines and Singapore, there are management institutes and colleges with training facilities that could meet these needs. The Korean Development Institute for instance, based in Seoul, is already receiving participants from Eastern Europe in its management courses.

Seed-beds of Private Enterprise

Another crucial area in which developing countries can help is the development of small and medium enterprises (SMEs). These are the seed-beds of dynamic private enterprise. The former centrally planned economies must, as a matter of urgency, generate thousands of them. Many, as in Asia, could be export-oriented. Certain developing countries, especially in Asia, have unrivalled experience in the promotion of SMEs. One example is India, where the National Small Industries Corporation has an extensive TCDC programme.

South-to-East cooperation could also be valuable in the agriculture sector. The former collectivist systems of farming will have to become more market-driven and consumer-oriented. Former socialist countries will also have to diversify their output if they are to compete effectively in world markets. Several developing countries, such as Thailand, can offer useful experience in agricultural diversification and productivity improvement. Countries such as India, Pakistan and Turkey have impressive agricultural research capacities. These could be shared through institutional linkages with countries possessing similar geographic and climatic conditions for agriculture.

Among other sectors, tourism and aviation offer increasing possibilities for collaboration, especially where developing countries border the territory of the Commonwealth of Independent States. Hotels, airports, travel agencies and tour operators need to be modernized and new ones created. Here many Asian countries have technical capacities and resources for investment and joint ventures.

Looking at the other side of the coin, the former socialist bloc countries also have much to offer the developing world. There are of course long-standing links dating

from the communist era, when there was a regular flow of aid from East to South. Despite the transformations that have occurred on the international scene, there is no reason why these connections should not continue on a different ideological basis.

Privatization is one area where cooperation can work both ways. Eastern Europe is a laboratory in which many methods of privatization are being tested under different conditions. Already certain approaches, such as the voucher scheme being adopted in Czechoslovakia, are arousing interest in some developing countries.

Despite the problems of the old centrally planned economies, many of them succeeded in producing a highly skilled work force through excellent training programmes. For many years countries such as Poland and Hungary have been passing on their skills to developing countries. For example, Hungary's Organization for International Technical and Scientific Cooperation (TESCO) provides experts and receives trainees from all over the developing world in a wide variety of fields including engineering, health care, transportation and agriculture. Such institutions can continue to play an important role in East-South cooperation and can even act as intermediaries in the transfer of technology from the most advanced countries of the North.

How can these opportunities for technical cooperation be exploited, given the current scarcity of resources? There are several possible modalities. First, developing countries could set up technical assistance funds for the former socialist bloc countries, along the lines of the "know-how funds" established by certain Western European countries. These would be used to pay for training and the sending of experts. In some developing countries, the business community might be persuaded to contribute to these funds, especially where there were commercial opportunities to be realized.

Mutual Gains

A second possibility is technical cooperation by barter—a mutual exchange of capacities in which no money would change hands. Organizations such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) could help to facilitate this process.

Third, networks of technical institutions, encompassing East and South, could be created with the help of organizations such as UNDP and the regional development banks. These institutions would share training facilities and exchange research.

Fourth, there is the possibility of cooperation in which the leading role is played by private sector bodies such as chambers of commerce, with support from governments and international agencies. Most appropriate would be a blend of all these options.

Whatever mechanisms are used, one message is clear: cooperation will bring mutual gains in the medium or long term, even though costs may sometimes outweigh benefits in the early stages. If East-South cooperation can become a reality, the result will be not only a stronger East and South but also a stronger world. ■

African participants and their Hungarian instructors at a workshop on metallurgical industries, held in Budapest.

Growing the Food of the Gods: Ghana's Success in Mushroom Cultivation

Under the guidance of an expert from Thailand, Ghana began two years ago to produce mushrooms on a commercial scale. The success of the scheme should encourage other developing countries to embark on similar projects through South-South cooperation. This report is by Patrick Addey, a Ghanaian writer on development issues.

Growing mushrooms in compost-filled plastic bags is the standard method in Ghana and many other countries.

For thousands of years, mushrooms have been prized as "the food of the gods" on account of their special flavour, nutritional value and medicinal properties. Today they offer developing countries an efficient way of combating malnutrition and boosting exports.

In ancient times, mushrooms were gathered only in the wild. The practice of cultivation developed slowly, as growers took a long time to understand the delicate biology of fungi. Two thousand years ago the Chinese led the way by cultivating the shiitake mushroom (*Lentinus edodes*). Europe took to mushroom growing much later. The familiar European white button mushroom (*Agaricus bisporus*) began to be cultivated in the 1650s.

Like alchemists, mushroom growers have tended to guard their hard-won knowledge jealously. The preparation of mushroom tissue for propagation and the various growing methods have traditionally been treated as top trade secrets. Now this knowledge is becoming more widely available.

Developing countries active in the field of mushroom cultivation include China, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Thailand. These countries have developed valuable expertise in growing the varieties of mushroom found in tropical and sub-tropical regions. One of the most successful is Thailand, the leading supplier of tropical mushrooms to the world market. Thailand produces about 80,000 tonnes of mushrooms per annum, grown on small-scale farms. The expertise acquired by these countries is now being disseminated through South-South cooperation, and one of the countries to benefit is Ghana.

Mushrooms have always grown wild in Ghana, and Ghanaians have for centuries used them as a

Above: **Stoves used for boiling mushroom bags to sterilize the compost before inserting the spawn.**
Right: **Bags stored for incubation.**
Far right: **Harvesting mushrooms.**

meat substitute. Eventually, however, demand came to exceed the supply of wild fungi, and the country found itself importing mushrooms in large quantities at exorbitant prices.

One of those who saw the need to change this situation was Kwesi Ahwoi, Executive Secretary of the Ghana Export Promotion Council (GEPC). In 1987 he took a team of Ghanaians to Sri Lanka, where they visited the UNDP-supported National Mushroom Project and talked to the project's consultant, Professor Anon Auetragul, a leading Thai mushroom expert.

Realizing the potential of mushroom farming for Ghana, Mr. Ahwoi contacted Leslie Sawyeer, a graduate of the University of Science and Technology at Kumasi, who had been cultivating mushrooms on his own since graduating in 1975. With funding from the International Trade Centre (ITC), Mr. Sawyeer went on a month's intensive study tour of Thailand to learn more about mushroom production and to explore the possibilities of expanding mushroom cultivation in Ghana.

A further important step was taken in 1990 when Prof. Auetragul visited Ghana for four months under an export promotion scheme supported by UNDP and ITC. This scheme included the launching of a National Mushroom Development Project (NMDP) under the auspices of Ghana's Food Research Institute, with GEPC handling the export and marketing side. One of Prof. Auetragul's most important tasks was to establish a laboratory to produce mushroom spawn and study propagation techniques. Today the laboratory also serves as a demonstration centre for trainee cultivators. In addition, Prof. Auetragul set up a collection of mushroom species and conducted field tests to assess the potential for growing various varieties of mushroom in Ghana.

Ghana's humid, tropical climate is very favourable for mushroom farming, and the country is much in need of the additional supply of protein that mushrooms can provide. Consequently Ghanaians are taking enthusiastically to mushroom cultivation. Many of them have received training from the NMDP, which is directed by Mr. Sawyeer.

In Ghana, as elsewhere, the advantages of mushrooms over other food sources include the following:

1. Mushrooms in their dried form have a higher protein content than any other vegetable product. They also contain a high concentration of essential vitamins and minerals, and are valued for their benefits to health, including the capacity to reduce blood cholesterol.

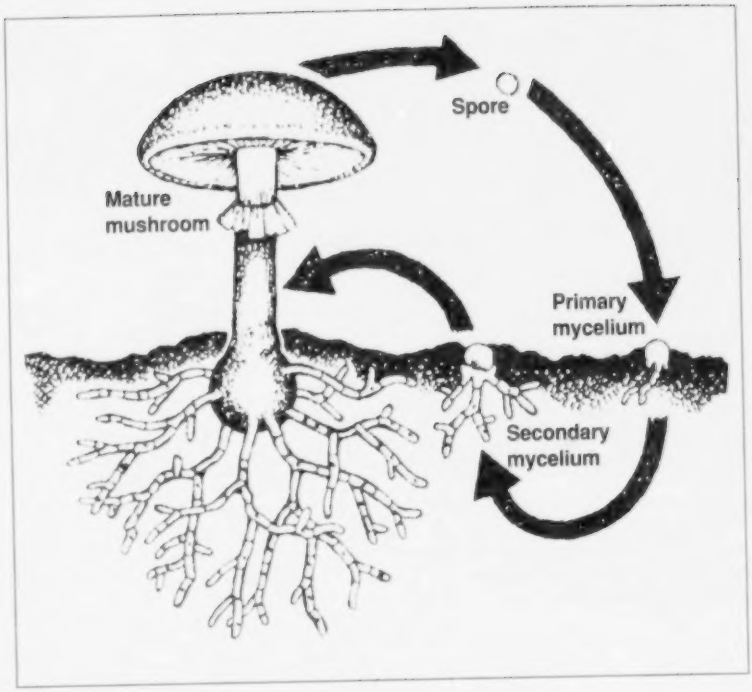
2. Mushrooms can be grown on a variety of waste products from agriculture or industry, such as straw, sawdust, coconut coir, corn cobs, cotton waste and banana leaves. Subsequently, these materials can be used as compost for other plants.
3. Once the technology has been mastered, cultivation requires relatively simple techniques and equipment.
4. A very small amount of land is needed for cultivation.
5. Mushrooms require a minimum of water and sunlight.
6. Mushroom cultivation can be done either as a full-time job or as a hobby.

The Ghanaian mushroom project uses six varieties: Indian oyster (*Pleurotus sajor-caju*), Bhutanese oyster (*Pleurotus eous*), abalone (*Pleurotus cystidiosus*), American oyster (*Pleurotus ostreatus*), Jew's ear mushroom (*Auricularia polytricha*) and straw or oil palm mushroom (*Volvariella volvacea*).

The life cycle of the mushroom begins when the mature mushroom produces microscopic male and female spores (seeds). These in turn develop into mycelium, a mass of threadlike tissue. At an early stage, the primary mycelium from the male spores "mates" with the mycelium from the female spores. This fusion produces a secondary mycelium, which develops into mature mushrooms.

Mushroom cultivation does not make use of the spores, which are difficult to handle on account of their minute size. Instead the cultivator works directly with the secondary mycelium, known as spawn, which can be reproduced from itself just as a rose bush can be grown from a cutting.

The cultivation system adopted in Ghana is a standard method used in many parts of the world. The procedure begins with the preparation of compost. The most popular material is sawdust, which ideally should first be decomposed for two or three weeks by the addition of substances that encourage fermentation. The compost is then put into heat-resistant plastic bags about 13 inches long, and is heated to kill off any micro-organisms that might compete with the mushrooms for nutrition. When the compost is fully sterilized, the mushroom spawn is inserted. The bags are then kept in a darkened room for several weeks. When the mycelium has spread over the compost, the room is ventilated and a small amount of light is let in, causing the mycelium to develop into mushrooms. Finally the bags are opened and the mushrooms cropped.



Ongoing technical advice and support is provided to growers by the NMDP. For example, the project supports its graduate farmers by supplying them with bags containing the mixture necessary for mushroom production—although currently the demand for bags exceeds the supply.

One Ghanaian who has taken up mushroom growing is Cudjoe Tsegah, a civil servant and part-time farmer. "Mushroom production," he says "has added to my family's protein intake. Sometimes we eat mushrooms in a salad. Sometimes we add them to rice or make mushroom sandwiches." The enterprise has also brought Mr. Tsegah some extra income. He started with an investment of US$760 and now has more customers than he can satisfy, including a number of restaurants.

Another Ghanaian who recently began mushroom growing after training with the NMDP is Adelaide Sey. Asked why she decided to become a cultivator, Mrs. Sey explained: "This is a very suitable activity for a woman, as the work does not require great strength. It enables me to meet my family's protein needs, and I can also sell some of the mushrooms to earn money." Finding buyers does not present a problem, as the GEPC, the co-promoter of the project, is always willing to market the produce that growers are unable to sell themselves.

It would be misleading to give the impression that mushroom cultivation is an instant solution to a country's protein problems. The initial capital outlay can present difficulties for an individual grower, and the growing process requires careful monitoring. However, provided there is adequate government support and supervision, the mushroom industry offers great hope to developing countries, as the case of Ghana shows. ■

Mushroom Growing: Learning the Trade Secrets

Anyone wishing to begin producing mushrooms will find a wealth of useful information in the recently published *Manual of Mushroom Cultivation* by Peter Oei (Tool Publications, Sarphistraat 650, 1018 AV Amsterdam, Netherlands). Topics covered by this comprehensive book include the basic biology of mushrooms, techniques of propagation, which species are suitable for particular climatic conditions, how to perform a feasibility study and how to find markets. The book is illustrated by numerous drawings and photographs.

For those seeking technical training or expertise in mushroom production, these are available from a number of sources in the developing world. Prof. Anon Auetragul, who advised the Ghanaians on their mushroom project, remains happy to share his unique knowledge of the subject. His organization, the International Mushroom Society (Thailand), offers study tours of mushroom farms and on-the-job training for groups or individuals. The society provides expertise and equipment and prepares project proposals for mushroom development. It will supply free of charge Prof. Auetragul's manuals on the cultivation of oyster, Jew's ear and straw mushrooms, published by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO). The address of the society is:

International Mushroom Society (Thailand)
2306 Phaholyothin Road,
Bangkhen
Bangkok 10900
Thailand
Tel: (662) 579-4418
Fax: (662) 561-2591.

Other developing country institutions offering training and expertise in mushroom cultivation include the following:

International Mushroom Society for the Tropics
Contact: Prof. S.T.Chang
c/o Department of Biology
The Chinese University of Hong Kong
Tel: (852) 609-6286
Fax: (852) 603-5646.

Indian Agricultural Research Institute
Division of Mycology and Plant Pathology
New Delhi 110 012
India
Tel: (91 11) 581474
Fax: (91 11) 575-2006.

Institute of Applied Neotropical Mycology (IMINAP)
Apartado Postal 701
Puebla 72001, Puebla
Mexico.

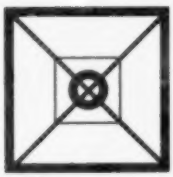
College of Postgraduates
Department of Mushroom Biotechnology
Apartado Postal I-12
Puebla 72130, Puebla
Mexico.

Quality Control and Training Centre
Department of Plant Pathology, Mushroom Unit
University of the Philippines
Los Baños, Laguna
Philippines.

Atatürk Horticultural Research Institute
P.K. 15 Yalova
Turkey.

An informative scientific journal in the field is *Micologia Neotropical Aplicada*, published in Mexico, which contains original papers on the cultivation and uses of tropical fungi. Inquiries should be addressed to:

D. Martínez-Carrera
Editor-in-Chief
Apartado Postal 701
Puebla 72001, Puebla
Mexico.



Focal Points in Focus

In this interview with the editor of Cooperation South, Abebe Ambatchew, Director of the United Nations Development Programme's Special Unit for TCDC, talks about the importance of TCDC focal points and recent measures to strengthen their effectiveness.

Cooperation South: *Since you became Director of the Special Unit at the beginning of 1991, you have placed great emphasis on the strengthening of TCDC focal points. Could you explain why focal points are so essential to TCDC?*

Ambatchew: The importance of focal points has to be seen in the context of how TCDC is promoted and applied. The basic principle of TCDC, as conceived by the 1978 Buenos Aires Plan of Action, is that cooperation should be managed and implemented by the developing countries themselves. If this is the case, obviously the effective promotion of TCDC at the national level is vital. This is why the Buenos Aires Plan of Action recommended that each developing country should organize a flexible mechanism to promote TCDC. This mechanism has evolved into what we now call the national TCDC focal point system.

CS: *What exactly is expected of national focal points?*

Ambatchew: Basically they play a facilitating role: promoting TCDC, assisting the development of appropriate national policies, acting as a channel for information on capacities and needs in their own country and in other developing countries, creating links between relevant institutions, liaising with their counterparts abroad—these are the main tasks of focal points.

CS: *How many countries have focal points?*

Ambatchew: There are now designated national focal points in almost all the developing countries. The focal point is either an individual or a unit, located within a government department or ministry. Usually it is in the ministry of finance, planning and economic development or the foreign ministry. Most of the focal points are not employed full-time on TCDC. They have other responsibilities as well.

CS: *In what ways do you feel the focal point mechanism needs to be improved?*

Ambatchew: We have been requested by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, as well as by governments, to strengthen focal points, because the mechanism is not currently functioning up to expectations. There are several weaknesses in the system. Focal points are usually not given a clear idea of their function and terms of reference. Sometimes they are inappropriately located. In most instances they do not have sufficient information on capacities and needs. Frequently they do not have specific resources to carry out their functions properly.

These are serious constraints. However, there are many focal points that are performing effectively. This is especially the case when they also hold a position such as director general of technical cooperation, which gives them leverage to get things done.

The reason for our current emphasis on focal points is this: If we are to create greater awareness of the potential and comparative advantage of TCDC, if we are to promote the much wider use of this modality, we have to work through institutions at the national level. A good illustration of this is that the Special Unit for TCDC is delegating its sensitization and training activities to focal points and institutions in developing countries. We have identified resource people in the countries to assist in these activities. Some of these people attended a "training of trainers" workshop which we held in New York in April of this year. The aim of all our efforts is to bring about a situation where TCDC is not marginalized but is fully utilized in the implementation of national programmes and projects.

CS: *Can you describe some of the activities that the Special Unit has been conducting to strengthen focal points?*

Ambatchew: One of the most important things we have been doing is to organize regional workshops at which focal points get together to share their experiences, establish contacts, be apprised of current developments and receive information about successful TCDC exchanges. These workshops also enable the focal points to have a perception of their role and to be kept up to date on relevant decisions of UN bodies regarding TCDC.

Since the autumn of last year we have held workshops for focal points in most regions. In October 1991 we held one for the Asia region, in Seoul, in connection with a TCDC programming exercise for small and medium enterprises in the electrical industry. This year we had one in Damascus in August for the Arab States, one in Caracas in September for Latin America, combined with the annual meeting of the Latin American Economic System, and we have one

scheduled in Addis Ababa in early 1993 for the Africa region. We also had one in September in Warsaw—a workshop for the Baltic States and the Commonwealth of Independent States, which in part fulfilled a similar function.

In addition to these workshops, we support the focal points in other ways. We help them organize sensitization workshops, we provide them with training manuals, publications, information from the INRES database and so on. They in turn help us tremendously in giving us feedback.

CS: *Could you also say something about the role of focal points in the UN system?*

Ambatchew: Yes, there are also focal points in many of the UN agencies. In some cases they are individuals, in others units of two or three people. Their function is to promote TCDC in the work of the organization and in the sector for which it is responsible. We had a very successful consultation meeting of the UN focal points here in New York in July to strengthen our links. We agreed to meet every year.

CS: *Do you see this as a generally positive time for TCDC?*

Ambatchew: Yes, very much so, and for various reasons. One is the explicit priority being given to TCDC in development programmes and activities. A good example of this is the fact that the Governing Council of UNDP has identified TCDC as one of six priority areas for UNDP's current five-year programming cycle. Other UN organizations are also giving high priority to TCDC.

I should also mention that in July the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations made some very important recommendations relating to TCDC. They called on developing countries to give first consideration to the TCDC option, to strengthen their focal point mechanisms, and to adopt clear and specific national policies favourable to the use of TCDC. They also called for the strengthening and expanding of the INRES database and for an improvement in the flow of information on capacities in developing countries. In addition, the Council urged that TCDC be employed not only in the implementation stage but also in the formulation and design of projects.

Turning to the governments of developing countries, we find many indications of the increasing use of TCDC. The training opportunities, the transfer of skills, the advisory services being offered by developing countries to each other are increasing all the time.

Of course TCDC still faces constraints—shortage of information, attitudinal barriers, the problem of financing exchanges. Nevertheless, TCDC has firmly established itself as a viable and cost-effective modality for development. The important task now is to make sure that it is as widely utilized as possible. ■

Participants at a workshop for TCDC focal points from the Arab States, held last August in Damascus, Syria.

Towards Health Without Frontiers

Violeta González reports on a meeting held in Santiago, Chile, in July, to plan a wide-ranging regional health programme for Latin America and the Caribbean.

One of the most ambitious and imaginative schemes in the history of South-South cooperation is taking shape in Latin America and the Caribbean. Project Convergence, as it is called, aims to set up a region-wide system of coordination in the health sector, embracing governments, the medical and engineering professions, universities, research institutes and private companies.

In response to the request of 27 countries, Project Convergence was jointly conceived in 1990 by the Latin American Economic System (SELA), the Panamerican Health Organization (PAHO), a regional branch of the World Health Organization (WHO), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) through its Special Unit for TCDC. The project emerged against a background of growing concern about the adverse impact on the region's health caused by deteriorating economic conditions during the 1980s. After its formulation, the project was submitted to UNDP, which agreed to contribute US$170,000.

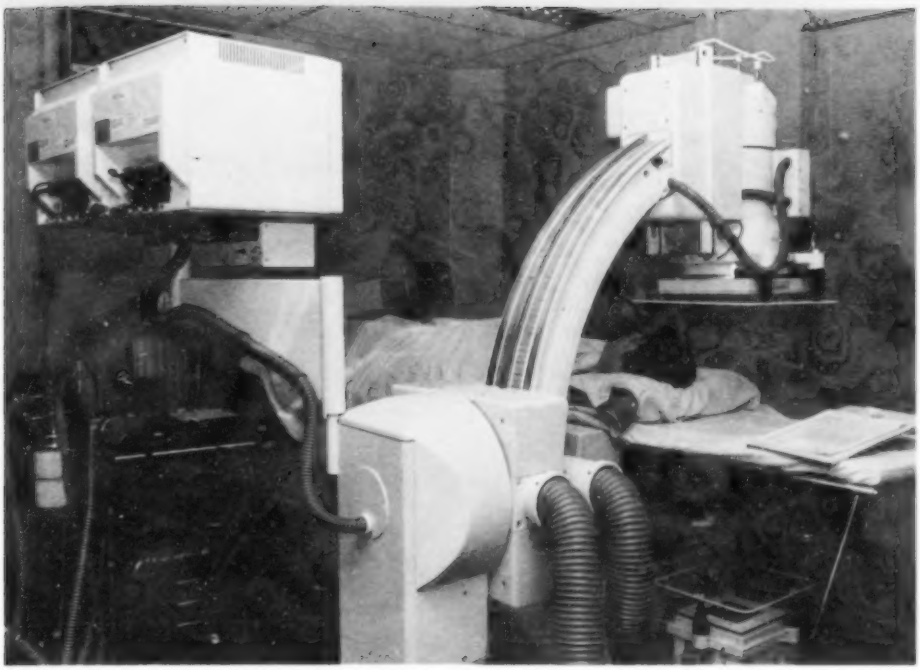
The Santiago meeting brought the scheme to a more concrete planning stage. Twenty-four Latin American and Caribbean nations were represented, as were SELA, UNDP and WHO/PAHO. UNDP's Special Unit for TCDC, which paid air fares and living expenses for the participants, was represented by its director, Abebe Ambatchew, and Graciela Vazquez-Diaz, senior regional officer for Latin America and the Caribbean. Also participating were representatives from various other multi-national and regional organizations, from a number of donor countries such as Canada, Japan, Sweden and the United States, and from private companies in the health sector. The meeting included an exhibition of medical products from all over the region.

The event was preceded by extensive preparatory work and by four sub-regional gatherings. At these gatherings, around 400 bilateral agreements were adopted and 56 regional projects were proposed. At Santiago these 56 proposals were discussed and evaluated, and eight regional projects were finally selected in the following areas: (1) vaccination methods; (2) information systems; (3) serums and biological reagents; (4) standards and regulations; (5) medical and hospital equipment; (6) medicinal plants; (7) water, sanitation and environmental protection; (8) orthesis, prosthesis and rehabilitation.

At the meeting's opening session, Mr. Ambatchew described Project Convergence as an exercise which "we feel will promote real technical cooperation among developing countries." At a time when aid from the North has become increasingly scarce, he said, the option of South-South cooperation has to be the first choice.

Dr. Jorge Peña, the representative of WHO/PAHO, forcefully summed up what is at stake for the region in the health sector. He explained that Latin America and the Caribbean currently buy over $10 billion worth of medical goods every year, representing 3.5 per cent of the world market. At present, a large part of this market is supplied from outside, when it could be supplied from within the region. He pointed out that in Latin America and the Caribbean there are 800 firms in this field that want to expand and 2,000 scientific institutions that are currently underutilized and isolated from one another. If this potential could be catalyzed around strategic projects, he said, the health sector in the region would take a big step forward. The eight projects that have emerged from the meeting are intended to play a catalytic role.

Interviewed after the meeting, Dr. Peña talked more specifically about how things could be improved in the region. As one example, he cited the case of traditional dental chairs. At present many countries are importing these expensive items from the North, when a simplified and less expensive type of chair could easily be produced in Latin America and made available throughout the re-



Opposite page: **Abebe Ambatchew, Director of the Special Unit for TCDC, addressing the meeting.** ***Left:*** **Treatment for gall stones at a hospital in Chile.** ***Below:*** **The meeting included a display of medical products from all over the region.**

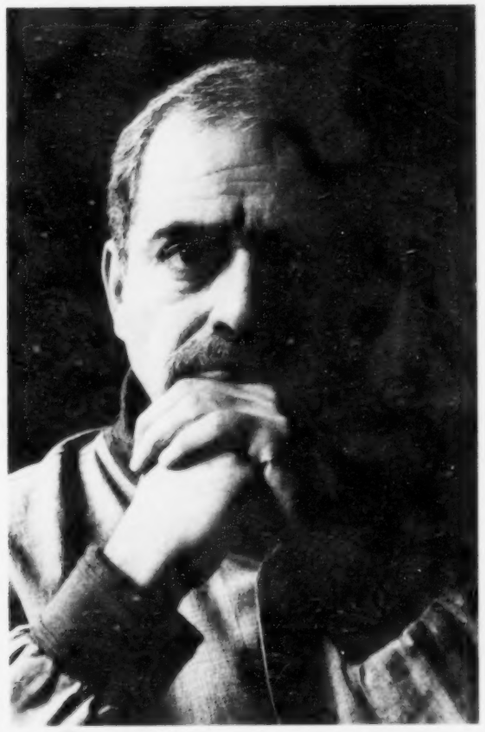
gion. The same applies to other items of medical equipment as well as to many medicinal drugs. To improve the situation, it will be necessary to have regional cooperation in research and development, a harmonized set of standards and health codes for all countries of the region, an information system that provides data on equipment and medicines available, and trading agreements that permit the free circulation of goods and medical technology. Project Convergence will help to bring about these changes.

To illustrate how even very small countries can contribute, the example of the snake venom antidote being made by an institute in Costa Rica is significant. In many countries of the region, snake bites are a public health problem. The Costa Rican centre is one of the few that is producing an antidote. Currently the product is being used mainly for home consumption, but the institute has the capacity to expand production and supply a wider market. It should also be possible to link up this institute with others in Latin America working in the same field.

The medicinal plants project was one of the most important to be discussed at the meeting. Many different organizations in Latin America have been conducting research in this field, often duplicating work. Now the countries of the region will combine their efforts, with each country concentrating on a particular range of medicinal plant products. In this way quality can be raised and costs lowered.

Participants left the meeting feeling that it had been a landmark event, with wide implications for Latin America and the Caribbean. The work of implementing the project will be coordinated by an inter-agency committee comprising SELA, UNDP, PAHO, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). At the annual meeting of SELA in September, the member countries gave their support to the inter-agency committee and agreed to provide resources for the project from their national budgets. The project also received a positive response when it was presented by the Permanent Secretary of SELA to a meeting of Latin American presidents, held in Madrid in July.

While Project Convergence addresses only one sector, it clearly sets an important example for others. In revitalizing a region, there is surely no better place to begin than the health of its inhabitants. ■



Mexican television producer Miguel Sabido.

Television as a Catalyst for Social Change

Mexico's success in using television soap operas to convey social messages has been emulated by other developing countries, as Christopher McIntosh reports.

For millions of people all over India, young and old, rich and poor, the high point of the week is when the television set is switched on to the latest episode of the soap opera *Humraahi* ("Come Along With Me"). Since it began in January 1992, *Humraahi* has attained record-breaking ratings. Its purpose is not merely to entertain but to convey a series of social messages relating to such issues as the status of women, child care, family harmony and family planning.

These issues are brought into focus by characters who represent positive and negative role models. The positive ones include a young village woman who teaches about female equality in a women's organization, and a male teacher who espouses the cause of women's rights. Among the negative role models is a father who will not allow his daughter to continue her education. One of the most moving moments in the story came in episode 25 when an attractive young servant girl, called Angoori, died in childbirth after an arranged marriage. The story is written with the intention that each viewer will identify with one or more of the main characters. The negative characters eventually change their attitudes and become positive ones. At the end of each episode a short epilogue is delivered by the well-known Indian film actress Tanuja, inviting the audience to think about the issues that have been presented.

An earlier soap opera dealing with similar themes, called *Hum Log* ("We People"), was broadcast in 1984-85 and was the first Indian soap opera to be made with commercial sponsorship. *Humraahi* is sponsored by the Tata Oil Mills Company, owned by the Indian industrialist J.R.D. Tata. Its success has delighted its creator, Roger Pereira, an Indian communications specialist with a strong interest in development and social issues.

Mr. Pereira began to plan the series in 1985 with the encouragement of David Poindexter, President of a non-governmental organization called Population Communications International, who has long advocated the use of television drama series to promote family planning.

The makers of both *Hum Log* and *Humraahi* were inspired and guided by the ideas of the Mexican television producer Miguel Sabido, a pioneer in the use of the soap opera as an agent for social change. The methodology that he developed is now being used not only in India but also in other developing countries. Mr. Sabido spoke about his work while visiting United Nations headquarters in July for a seminar on the use of soap operas to inform audiences about global problems.

"I was a student in the 1950s when television arrived in Mexico," Mr. Sabido recalls. "At the university we talked excitedly about this new medium and how it could be put to good social use. After university, I went to commercial television and asked them to teach me how to write, produce and direct soap operas."

Television soap operas began to be shown in Mexico in 1957 and rapidly took on an educational function. In 1974 a national research institute, now known as the Mexican Institute for Communication Research, was created to make a systematic study of the social impact of broadcasting. Miguel Sabido was appointed as its first director.

The programme of research that Mr. Sabido initiated drew on the work of cutting-edge experts in the field of communications theory, combined with the practical experience of those who had been making television soap operas in Mexico for nearly two decades. Mr. Sabido and his fellow researchers thought deeply about such questions as how to create stories and characters that have the desired impact on an audience, how television programmes can cause people to modify their behaviour, and how the effect of such programmes can be monitored.

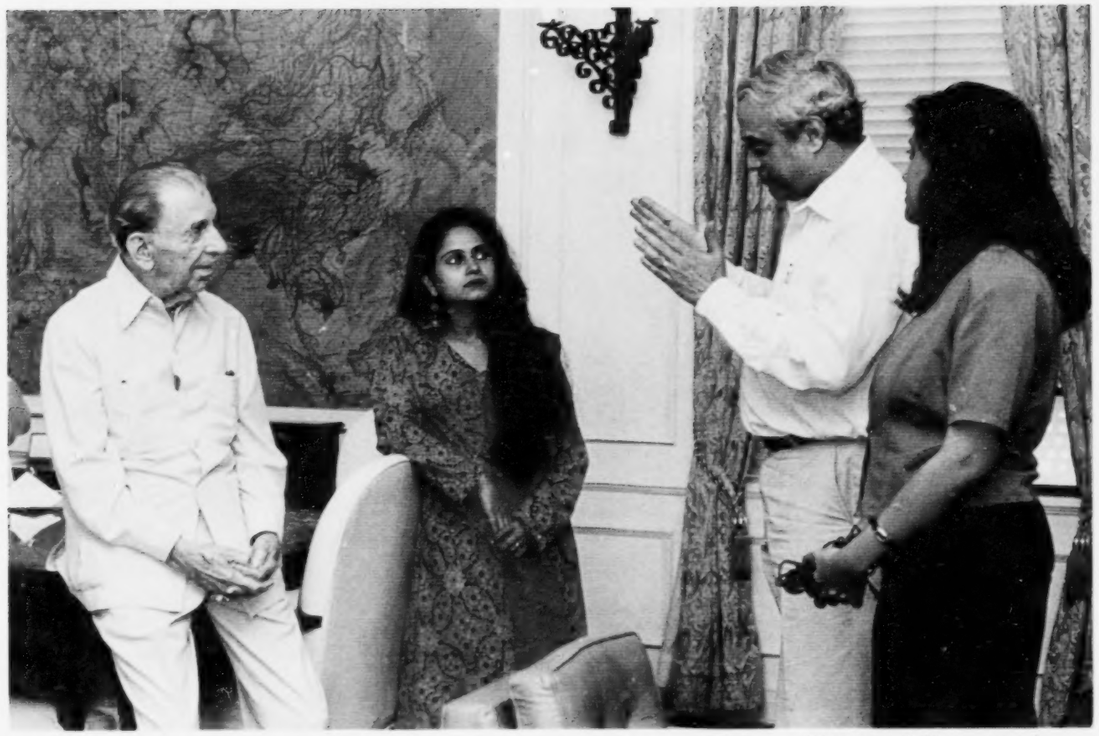
In the same year that the institute was founded, Mr. Sabido tested his methodology by producing a soap opera called *Ven Conmigo* ("Come With Me"). Designed to help the Mexican government combat illiteracy, it was broadcast in 180 half-hour episodes over the course of a year. By the last episode nearly a million illiterate adults had registered under the National Plan for Adult Education.

Encouraged by this success, Mr. Sabido produced a second soap opera entitled *Accomañame*, where the message had to do with family planning. As a result of this broadcast, the sale of contraceptives in Mexico rose significantly, as did the number of women attending family planning clinics. Commensurately, the Mexican population growth rate declined.

Mr. Sabido went on to produce many more soap operas, dealing with a wide variety of social themes, ranging from children's rights to sexual education for teenagers.

He emphasizes that making soap operas is not a one-way process but involves a continual interplay with the viewers, whose reactions

Scenes from the Indian television soap opera *Humraahi* ("Come Along With Me"). Sadiya Siddiqui (*top*) plays Angoori, who dies in childbirth after an arranged marriage.



J.R.D. Tata *(left)*, sponsor of *Humraahi*, conferring with actress Sadiya Siddiqui *(centre)*, Roger Pereira, producer of the series, and Mr. Pereira's daughter, Roma.

are taken into account in the planning of future episodes. "Every soap opera," he says, "is a meditation about values. We are always careful to put different points of view on any issue. Then the audiences can think about it and reach their own conclusions." He also stresses the need for close coordination with the national institutions related to the message of the soap opera. *Ven Conmigo*, for example, would have been ineffective without the existence of a network of special schools for teaching adults to read.

In 1982 Mr. Sabido went to India to give a seminar on his methodology, marking the beginning of a continuing association with Indian television producers. The following year a Kenyan broadcasting team came to Mexico to be trained in the Sabido methods. Subsequently the Kenyans made both a television and a radio soap opera on family planning, a previously taboo subject which the broadcasts have helped to legitimize in Kenya.

Television personnel from Nigeria and the Philippines have also gone to Mexico to learn the methods developed by Mr. Sabido. In some cases, travel for the trainees was provided by their national airline or broadcasting agency. Training at the Mexican Institute of Communication was given free of charge. All of the exchanges were greatly facilitated by Population Communications International, which brought about the initial contacts and helped to secure funding.

This striking example of South-South cooperation in broadcasting has already had far-reaching effects in the developing world, as the ratings of *Humraahi* prove. In a world where communications and the media are playing an increasingly vital role, it is clear that Mr. Sabido's methods have enormous potential. ■

Rural Energy: Sustainable Solutions for Latin America

Last July a group of experts from 19 countries of Latin America and the Caribbean met in Buenos Aires, Argentina, to exchange experiences in the development of rural energy and to draft a regional programme in this sector. A subsequent meeting in Mexico City in November consolidated the programme. Amanda Palermo reports on the meetings.

Like many regions of the world, Latin America and the Caribbean have a large number of rural communities where people live in conditions of extreme poverty. Many programmes set in motion to ameliorate this situation have failed because a vital ingredient was not given sufficient attention: energy.

Three years ago, in an attempt to overcome this deficiency, seven countries of the region—Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico and Uruguay — formed the Latin American and Caribbean Working Group on Rural Energy for Sustainable Development (GLAERS). After intensive research and discussions, the group issued a document entitled *Energizacion para un Desarollo Rural Sostenible* (Energy for Sustainable Rural Development), in which the problem is analysed and practical solutions recommended.

The aim of the Buenos Aires meeting was to take the work of GLAERS a stage further by formulating a regional plan of action in the rural energy sector, drawing on the knowledge and experience of a wide range of Latin American and Caribbean countries. The event, hosted by the Government of Argentina, was supported by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), through its Special Unit for TCDC.

The meeting was attended by 60 experts, representing Argentina, Barbados, Belize, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela. Also participating were representatives of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, FAO, the Inter-american Development Bank (IDB), the Latin American Energy Organization (OLADE), UNDP and other international and specialized groups.

Presentations by the participants illustrated the enormous variety of sustainable energy technologies that the region possesses. The Brazilian delegate described a water pumping system using gas made from charcoal by partial combustion. The Mexican and Argentinian representatives talked about their experience with solar power. Other delegates spoke about their countries' experience in the use of windpower, small-scale hydropower, high-efficiency diesel engines and a variety of other technologies. Also discussed were ways of using traditional energy sources, such as fuelwood, in a more sustainable and environment-friendly way.

In addition to technical matters, the participants discussed policy and organizational issues, such as how to ensure that the energy needs of rural communities are taken into account in government planning, the problems of funding and the need to involve non-governmental and international organizations.

The meeting was followed up by a similar regional gathering in Mexico City in November which consolidated the plans drawn up in Buenos Aires and initiated concrete negotiations between governments on the implementation of the proposals. The two meetings have set a wide-ranging agenda for the region in the rural energy sector. Countries will collaborate in training, research, information flow and technology evaluation, among other areas.

The FAO's Senior Energy Coordinator, Gustavo Best, described the meetings as "the most important on this theme that have ever taken place in the region." He spoke of the "mosaic of possibilities" that the region possesses in the rural energy sector, including traditional sources such as wood, modern ones such as gas and petroleum, and alternative ones such as solar power. "The aim," he said "is to find the optimum combination of these possibilities from an economic, social and environmental point of view." ■

A photovoltaic plant for pumping water in La Rioja province, Argentina.

Development Dogmas Challenged

***SEEDS OF PEACE*,**
by Sulak Sivaraksa
(Parallax Press,
P.O. Box 7355,
Berkeley, California 94707)

From time to time it is good for those involved in development to step back and ask some fundamental questions that go beyond immediate practicalities and address the nature and purpose of development itself. Those who do not shy away from such questions will welcome this thought-provoking book by the Thai author Sulak Sivaraksa, one of Asia's leading social thinkers and activists. Others may be disturbed by the way in which Mr. Sivaraksa challenges some of the most sacred dogmas of the development movement.

The essential image underlying traditional development thinking is that of an escalator carrying the countries of the world towards ever greater heights of technical achievement. According to this model, some countries may be nearer to the top than others, but all are in the long run moving upward. In cases where development fails, the standard response is simply to say that the escalator is not moving fast enough or efficiently enough.

Mr. Sivaraksa boldly questions the validity of this model. It is time, he says, that we challenged what he calls "the religion of consumerism." He points to his own region as one example of how this religion has swept aside traditional values, with disastrous results for the region's social fabric, culture, environment and health. Village self-sufficiency, for example, has been undermined by the drive to sell food to world markets instead of growing it for home consumption. This, along with environmental degradation, has caused a huge migration to the cities, with millions of women forced into semi-slavery as servants or prostitutes. Ominously he says: "When one looks deeply at Southeast Asia, one can see the entire planet."

As a remedy, Mr. Sivaraksa does not suggest simply returning to the old ways and discarding western modes altogether. Rather, he advocates finding a "middle path," applying the best of both in an intelligent way. "We cannot," he says, "simply turn back the clock to the 'good old days,' but, with awareness of the models that our ancestors left us, we can evaluate and apply all development models and begin to build a society worth living in."

Mr. Sivaraksa devotes much of the book to discussing a possible model of development based on Buddhist values. As an example, he quotes the case of a Thai Buddhist abbot who succeeded in transforming an impoverished province, where the rice crops were regularly destroyed by inundations of sea water. The abbot persuaded the inhabitants to switch to coconut trees and to make coconut sugar using traditional techniques. They are now selling the sugar all over the country, and have since branched out into growing palm trees for building materials and planting herbs for use in traditional medicine.

Mr. Sivaraksa's comments on technology are highly pertinent. "People speak about technology as if it were value-free, when in fact it is not... Value systems and ethics are not peripheral to science and technology. In fact, they constitute the basic assumptions and the driving force of science. A shift of values from self-assertion and competition to cooperation and social justice, from expansion to conservation, from material acquisition to inner growth would be of prime importance in creating a new science and a new technology."

Equally importantly for readers of this magazine, Mr. Sivaraksa urges "political and economic solidarity of the South in dealing with the North." He writes: "There cannot be world peace without economic justice. Thus, Third World solidarity is indispensable to the establishment of peace. Pushing beyond the existing commodity cartels ... a new generation of strong institutions is necessary to consolidate the power of the South in its negotiations with the North."– C.M. ■

TCDC-INRES

The Challenge of Decentralization

By Edward C. White

In January 1990 the Special Unit for TCDC began an experiment in decentralizing the TCDC-INRES database by creating outposts of the system in the field. Since that date 12 outpost centres have been established. They will regularly send diskettes back to New York, containing new or revised entries. This information will be used to update the central database, which will periodically be redistributed to the field on CD-ROM (compact disc, read only memory). In addition to the main outposts, three associated centres will use the system for a smaller range of activities.

In principle, decentralization appeared to offer many attractions. INRES could be brought closer to end-users in developing countries, it would become better known, its response time in answering inquiries would be decreased, usage of the system could be expected to increase and better quality could be achieved by calling upon the special knowledge and skill available in the various countries for the purpose of identifying good institutions for registration. Moreover, INRES is a large system containing detailed records on institutions from over 100 countries. Registrations in INRES are in English, French and Spanish, and the use of three languages for data entry places special demands on data entry operators. By distributing a part of the workload to the outposts, the Special Unit felt that it would be possible to update records more frequently and efficiently, while adding to the number of registered institutions.

Decentralization of a large, complex database such as INRES proved to be challenging. INRES requires a relatively advanced computer system and, because of its size, at the time when decentralization was started it could only be distributed on tapes.

Initially, the system was placed in three countries: Ghana, Haiti and Algeria. These were selected with a view to seeing how safely and efficiently the system could be operated on a decentralized basis and whether the anticipated advantages could be realized. In Ghana and Haiti, the outposts were set up in UNDP offices. In Algeria, the location was a government office.

Impact of the CD-ROM

Whenever INRES was discussed in international meetings or during briefings, the call for its decentralization was reiterated. Fortunately, the advent of the CD-ROM in late 1990 as a viable and affordable means of disseminating databases, along with the development of the comparatively cheap 386SX microprocessor, made it possible to cut the cost of new outposted locations by 50 per cent. In the light of these new developments, even before there was definitive evidence that the decentralization process would bring all the benefits hoped for, the Special Unit decided to add a second group of installations to the initial experimental ones.

Decentralization at the individual country level continued, with new locations being created in Tunisia, Cyprus, Iraq, Thailand and Pakistan. At the same time the Special Unit decided to begin concentrating on international, regional and sub-regional installations, since it was felt that this approach would be simpler yet more efficient and cost-effective than country-level decentralization. Agreements were reached with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to house the system. The Latin American Economic System (SELA), located in

Caracas, Venezuela, agreed to become a centre for Latin America and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean. A short while later the Jamaica Planning Institute in Kingston was added as a centre for the English-speaking Caribbean.

Recently decisions were taken to round out the geographic spread of INRES installations further by adding a Sub-Saharan Africa centre at the Organization for African Unity (OAU) in Addis Ababa, and a South Pacific regional location at the UNDP Office in Suva, Fiji. In addition to the regular outposted locations, the three associated locations have been equipped and will house the TCDC-INRES system as soon as they are operational. One is the South Bank, at the African Development Bank in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. Two others are housed in the G-77 Trade Information Network Centres in Doula, Cameroon, and Karachi, Pakistan.

The sole purpose of TCDC-INRES is to support wider use of the TCDC modality in international technical cooperation by gathering, maintaining and disseminating information about the capacities of developing country institutions. Therefore, an outposted INRES location should be a department or institution that is professionally concerned with development cooperation if it is to serve a useful purpose. All the locations mentioned above, including the associated ones, share this characteristic.

Decentralization has meant facing several difficult issues. One of the most obvious has been the need to train managers and operators of the installations. Another has been the cost of the heavy-duty equipment required. Other problems are the continuing need for periodic updates of data and software, and the necessity to accommodate slightly differing hardware configurations in the various outposts. These factors have necessitated considerable hand-holding of outpost personnel, and some custom tailoring of software to meet local circumstances.

What have been the results of the decentralization so far? In several of the locations it was difficult to train managers and operators. In other cases, more active use of the system has awaited managerial policy decisions in the organizations concerned.

Progress in the Outposts

Nevertheless, many of the centres are now beginning to make progress. Recently all the data on institutions in Cyprus has been updated by a national consultant, and the INRES location in Nicosia has carried out all the data entry. Similar work is going forward in Tunisia and will begin shortly in most of the other outposts, making use of a fast, simple diskette-based registration system developed by INRES.

At UNIDO a major effort is underway to ensure that the INRES database includes all the major developing country institutions with strong capacities to provide training and/or expertise in industry and technology-related fields. UNIDO's training branch is also studying ways in which it can use the INRES system to automate the annual production of its directory of training opportunities in the industrial and technology sectors. It is hoped that a similar effort to upgrade and update INRES data on agriculture-related sectors may get underway at FAO by the end of 1992. SELA is providing invaluable support in updating information on its 26 member countries. Many users of INRES may not be aware that all of the outposted locations can carry out searches and respond to queries for information. Users are encouraged to contact whatever centre they find it most convenient to use.

Based on recommendations of evaluation studies carried out during 1991, and on accumulated experience, future INRES outposts will be set up only in regional and sub-regional locations and international organizations. While one of the original motivations for decentralization was improved data quality, experience suggests that this can better be attained (a) by increased use of locally recruited consultants to identify institutions and collect data, and (b) by concentrating efforts to expand the database on fewer and higher priority sectors. Nevertheless, the desire of users, particularly those in developing countries, to see INRES further decentralized at the country level continues unabated.

The Special Unit will respond to this demand by publishing a special version of INRES (called INRES-Lite), which is currently under development. This version can be run on inexpensive hardware platforms and on networks. It can be used in many locations where there is no necessity to operate a full version of INRES capable of data entry and complex data processing. The INRES-Lite system will still be of a size that limits its distribution to the CD-ROM medium. It is not anticipated that this will be a serious limitation, as CD-ROM has already acquired the status of the "database publishing medium" of choice for the foreseeable future, particularly in developing countries. The cost of CD-ROM readers continues to drop steadily as use of computer CDs spreads. This creates excellent prospects for the Special Unit for TCDC to use INRES much more widely to promote and support the spread of TCDC. ■

Directory of INRES Outposts

Ministère de l'Economie
Centre National d'Information et de Documentation (CNIDE)
B.P. 65
Cité du 5 juillet, Bab-Ezzouar
Algeria
Tel: 213-2-751210
Telex: 64266 CNIDE DZ

PPD/ECDC
UNIDO
Vienna International Centre
P.O. Box 300
A-1400 Vienna
Austria
Tel: 43-1-21131
Fax: 43-1-237401
Telex: 135612
Cable: UNIDO VIENNA

UNDP
P.O. Box 5605
Nicosia
Cyprus
Tel: 357-2-303194
Fax: 357-2-366-125
Telex: 4861 UNDP CY
Cable: UNDEVPRO NICOSI

UNDP
P.O. Box 1423
Accra
Ghana
Tel: (874) 772-837
Fax: (874) 150-5362
Telex: 2195
Cable: UNDEVPRO ACCRA

UNDP
Boîte postale 557
Port-au-Prince
Haiti
Tel: 509-1-23-1400
Fax: 509-1-39340
Telex: 203-0091
Cable: UNDEVPRO

UNDP
P.O. Box 2048 (Alwiyah)
Baghdad
Iraq
Tel: 964-1-887-4321
Fax: 964-1-886-25-23
Telex: 212271 IK
Cable: UNDEVPRO BAGHDAD

The Planning Institute of Jamaica
39-43 Barbados Avenue
Kingston 5
Jamaica, WI
Tel: (809) 926-1480
Fax: (809) 926-4670
Telex: 3529 PLAN JAM J

Dept. of Technical and Economic Cooperation
Krung Kasem Road
Bangkok
Thailand
Tel: 662-281-6360
Fax: 662-280-1248
Cable: DEPTECO

Agence Tunisienne de Coopération Technique (ATCT)
34, Rue d'Iran, B.P. 34
CEDEX 1080, Tunis
Tunisia
Tel: 216-1-286-617
Telex: ATUCOP 13990

TCDC-INRES
Special Unit for TCDC
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304 East 45th Street, FF-1208
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USA
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Fax: (212) 906-6429
Telex: 422862
Cable: UNDEVPRO

What Readers Think of Cooperation South

The editor comments on readers' replies to the questionnaire published in the previous issue of the magazine.

First, our sincere thanks to the readers who filled in our questionnaire. We are encouraged by the generally positive tone of the responses.

As of early September 1992, we have received 500 replies, representing a wide geographical spread. The percentage from each region was as follows:

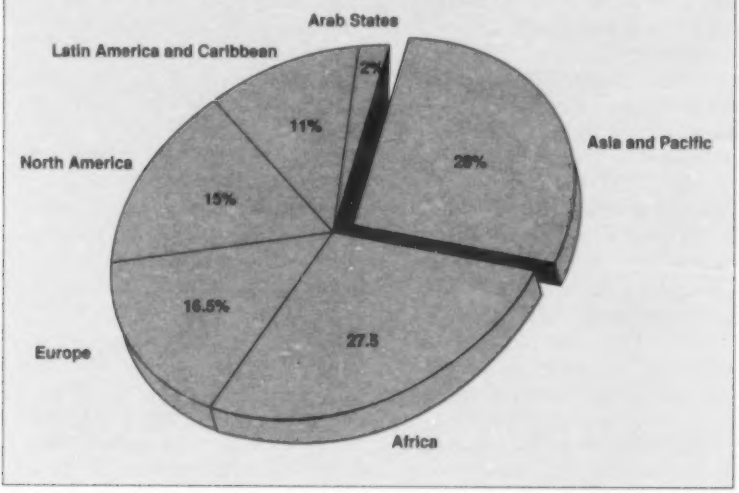
Asia and the Pacific	28%
Africa	27.5%
Europe	16.5%
North America	15%
Latin America and the Caribbean	11%
Arab States	2%

Developing countries accounted for 67% and developed countries for 33% of the replies received. Interestingly, three countries stood far above the others in the number of replies sent. These were United States (65), India (52) and Nigeria (50).

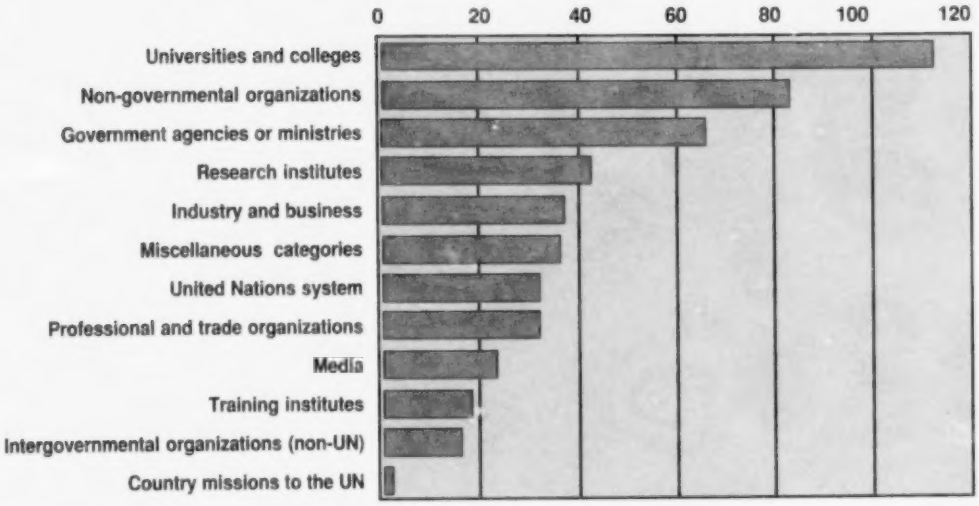
Respondents came from a wide variety of institutions. When the replies were counted according to category of institution, the results were as follows:

Universities and colleges	112
Non-governmental organizations	83
Government agencies or ministries	66
Research institutes	43
Industry and business	37
Miscellaneous categories	36
United Nations system	32
Professional and trade organizations	32
Media	23
Training institutes	18
Intergovernmental organizations (outside UN system)	16
Country missions to the UN	2

Percentage of survey replies from each region.



Number of replies by type of institution



The answers to question 1 in the survey (Which types of material in the magazine do you find most useful?) indicated an overall preference for articles of a practical nature. The largest proportion said their first or sole preference was for reports on "joint planning of TCDC exchanges." The second largest number were those who preferred articles on "capacities and technologies available for transfer." The third most popular category was "operational TCDC projects and exchanges."

The preferences varied, however, depending on the category of respondent. For example, respondents from universities and colleges gave top preference to "broader policy and philosophical issues relating to South-South cooperation." Non-governmental organizations gave the highest rating to "operational TCDC projects and exchanges."

As regards question 2 (How do you use the information in *Cooperation South*?), the largest number of respondents said they use the magazine "to inform and educate others." However, people in many categories, such as government personnel, said they use *Cooperation South* as a tool in their work. One reader answered: "To educate my children on international affairs."

We were pleased by the number of readers who gave affirmative answers to question 3, asking whether they had used information from the magazine to (A) establish a TCDC contact, (B) introduce new technologies or practices in development work, or (C) initiate a change of policy in the reader's organization. Eighty-two readers ticked A, 161 indicated B, and 181 marked C. Personnel of NGOs featured prominently among those who marked C. Many readers indicated that they had used the information for more than one of these purposes. This is an encouraging response, as it shows that the magazine is serving as a practical tool in TCDC.

In answer to the fourth question (How many people read the copy of *Cooperation South* that you receive?), 5% answered 1, 62% replied 2-10, 15% said 11-20, and 18% indicated that their copy was read by over 20 people.

As regards the rating of *Cooperation South*, 50 per cent of respondents rated it good, 40 per cent considered it very good, 5 per cent marked it fair, and only one per cent thought it poor.

Question 6 in the survey invited readers to say what changes, if any, they would like to see in the magazine. Many of the replies to this question called for more emphasis on the environment and on the transfer of appropriate technology. Here are some of the comments:

"More information is needed on environmentally-sound technology and the needs of developing countries." (India)

"More emphasis should be put on appropriate small-scale technologies available in different countries." (Uganda)

"*Cooperation South* needs more articles on appropriate technology (village technology) and on the environment." (Philippines)

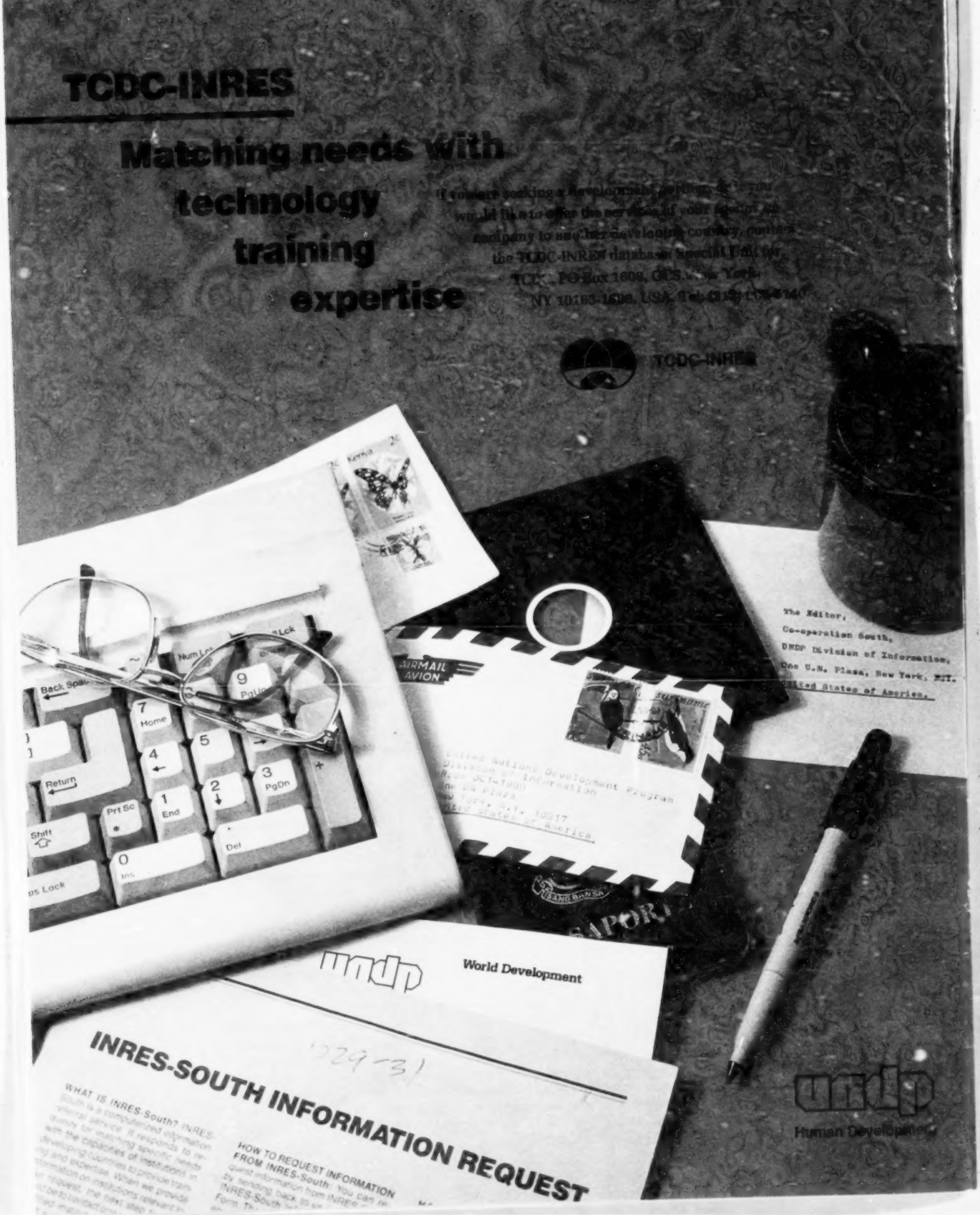
"More detailed, lengthier articles on technology transfer, application and field experiences." (Indonesia)

Many readers, especially from Africa and Asia, also suggested a regular listing of UN and other international organizations' meetings and conferences, as well as more information on coming TCDC events.

A number of respondents suggested that we become more environmentally aware by using recycled paper for *Cooperation South*. These readers will be pleased to know that the present issue is printed on recycled paper, and that this policy will continue.

A reader from the Congo asked that the magazine allocate more space for readers' letters. We would be pleased to do this if more readers wrote to us. We welcome letters commenting on articles or containing any information or opinion relevant to South-South cooperation.

Once again, we thank you for your responses. Your comments and the information you have provided will greatly assist us in continuing to improve *Cooperation South*. ■


TCDC-INRES
Matching needs with technology training expertise
TCDC-INRES
AIRMAIL
AVION
The Editor,
Co-operation South,
UNDP Division of Information,
One U.N. Plaza, New York, N.Y.
United States of America.
World Development
INRES-SOUTH INFORMATION REQUEST
WHAT IS INRES-South? INRES-South is a computerized information service. It responds to requests for matching specific needs with the capacities of institutions in developing countries to provide training and expertise. When we provide information on institutions relevant to your request, the next step is up to you to contact one
HOW TO REQUEST INFORMATION FROM INRES-South: You can request information from INRES-South by sending back to us the INRES-South Request Form. The
Human Development